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586 property, animals and children. If there is only one daughter the parents will divide her marriage price; she can live with either. If there is only one son the spouse keeping him must pay to the other Rs. 40, a cow and a pig and if the father keeps him a length of cloth to the wife, if the wife keeps him a copper vessel[9] to the husband. The last formal divorce in Lingthem was that of the first Dorjé Lapoon from his third and fourth wives (see Chapter Sixteen); a distant 'aunt' of the Mandal's was also divorced in this way in Sakhyong but there were no children.

If a woman runs away the husband's relatives will come for her and ask for her back or else claim the marriage price; but if the wife is unsatisfactory the husband will merely claim and get compensation in the form of the head and two legs of an ox and a scarf and rupee. Should such a girl re-marry a representative of the husband goes to the marriage; if the representative is the maternal uncle he is given Rs. 3 and half a leg of an ox; if the paternal uncle, Rs. 5 and the rump. By a recent decision of the twelve Mandals of Zongu in council it has been decided that these small recompenses shall be generally accepted for a runaway wife, instead of the large sums demanded earlier.

In the event of a woman showing a marked and continued preference for some man not her husband, the husband will almost always let her go to the lover. If the man cannot be classified as a 'younger brother' he must pay to the injured husband all the marriage expenses which he himself had paid earlier; or alternatively the girl's family will provide another girl as a substitute without further payment, but in that case the payments which the husband would have recovered from the lover will go to the girl's parents. If the lover is classifiable as a 'younger brother' the wife will probably be given to him for a small symbolical payment without any formalities; but it is understood that the younger brother will give special help if the elder brother remarries. Adultery, without really marked preference, is not a reason for divorce; and no anxiety is felt or expressed about the paternity of a man's children.

vi

581 In Lepcha theory marriage is not only a contract between two individuals, but also a contract between two groups; and they have

[436] [9] A copper pot is the most conspicuous Lepcha valuable: it is used in a great number of sociological transactions.

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a set of rules by which the union can be continued despite the death of one of the partners. These rules are not uncommon in non-European societies and have been given the technical terms of levirate, by which a man marries his deceased elder brother's wife, and sororate, by which a woman marries her deceased elder sister's husband. The Lepchas employ both of these devices, but their application is very different, and the levirate claims are much more strongly pressed.

In Lepcha theory the husband's group purchases the wife, as is explicitly recognised in the term 'price of the bride', *nyom-sa afaar*, which is used for the *aśék* presents; therefore if the husband dies the wife is still the property of his group, and can be married to another member of the same group without further reference to her parents, though on such occasions the wife's parents are actually given small courtesy presents. In theory too the wife has no right to refuse the man offered in the place of her dead husband, or, if she feels an unconquerable repulsion, her group should supply a second woman to replace her. Similarly if the husband wishes to refuse the wife he has inherited he should supply another man in place of himself. In practice these regulations are not always carried out, and relatively seldom if the woman is childless; if the heritable spouse really dislikes her inheritor no compulsion is used to force her to marry him, nor are there any sanctions for this; three women formerly married to inhabitants of Lingthem have in recent years returned to their own homes on the death of their husbands because they did not like their inheritors, or because their inheritors did not like them. In such cases, if the women remarry, the marriage payments are made, not to their family group, but to the family groups of their dead husbands.

The sororate claims are enforced rather differently. On the forty-ninth day after the death of his wife the widower must visit his parents-in-law, taking with him as presents a load of *chi* and a pig; on the receipt of which the parents-in-law consult with all their male relatives and offer him as wife another girl, preferably a real or classificatory younger sister of the first wife. If the man does not wish to accept the offered girl (and if there is nobody else suitable sometimes babies are offered) on the following day he must present his wife's parents with an ox, or, failing that, a pig, a load of *chi*, a big basket of rice and Rs. 5, and ask their permission to refuse the girl and to marry, if he feels so inclined,

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proved to be jealous and possessive, and refused to allow her husband to sleep with Tafoor-mu. 595

Dunbi was the 'younger brother' (actually the son of a younger paternal uncle) of the Muktair; at the period when the second wife was brought home he was completely alone, for his parents, wife, and children had all died in a dysentery epidemic. The Muktair took him into his house, and there he so well consoled Tafoor-mu that she became pregnant. The Muktair thereupon offered her to Dunbi; he *asék*'d her with the symbolical gift of one pig, and the families separated. One year later the second wife died.

The position of Tafoor-mu is one of the saddest in Lingthem; formerly the wife of the most prosperous man in the neighbourhood, and with two prosperous sons, she is now married to the poorest and most feckless man in the village. She has borne him three daughters; the eldest is married away, the second lives with her half-brother, Tafoor—she is unbetrothed Prumtu, the girl with the squint—and the youngest is a child of six. Although Tafoor and Chudo give her occasional presents she lives and dresses poorly, and has to work hard to compensate for her husband's sloth. As far as I could observe, Tafoor and Chudo feel little love or respect for their unfortunate mother.

We in Europe make passionate and personal love one of the chief pivots round which our society moves; the Lepchas of Zongu have completely excluded it, and it is liable to be extremely disruptive when it does flare up. The normal emotional situation is one of reasonable affection founded on mutual rights and benefits; people love one another for statable and stated reasons. No love is considered automatic; it is not considered inevitable that parents should love their children nor brothers their brothers and sisters; it is merely considered probable, because their situations entail the mutual obligations on which love is supposed to rest. Unless people are strongly deviant Lepchas are chary of pronouncing judgement on their neighbours' characters; most people, they say, are much of a muchness. Consequently it is to be expected that arranged marriages will turn out well, unless one of the partners has a really bad character; since love is founded on mutual obligations and benefits, these mutual obligations can be set up between any two people. It is worth noting that all three men whose love stories are recounted above fall well outside the Lepcha norm. The Muktair was, it would appear, an exceptionally strong-willed and ambitious man, and his love affair started when he was living 152 586

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152 in foreign surroundings; also his second wife came from a mixed
581 community. Katel and Aga on the other hand are both subnormal; they are foolish, suspicious and disliked.

152 For the Lepchas of Zongu sexual activity is practically divorced
831 from emotion; it is a pleasant and amusing experience, and as much a necessity as food and drink; and like food and drink it does not matter from whom you receive it, as long as you get it; though you are naturally grateful to the people who provide you with either regularly. One of the most difficult of all concepts for the European to take into consideration is the non-European attitude to sexual activity; with us, explicitly on the part of men, sexual desirability is most intimately bound up with aesthetic considerations. Although there may be individual disagreement as to who are included in the terms, potential sexual partners are divided into the categories of 'attractive' and 'unattractive'; and we believe that only perverts or prostitutes will have anything to do with the second category. Primitive people, I believe, do not make this distinction; there is social kudos to be acquired from being the known possessor of a beautiful wife or mistress; but for temporary sexual gratification any willing partner is equally acceptable. I found it extremely difficult to accept the notion that most of the men with young and pretty wives at one time or another slept with the two sixty-year-old haridans who were the promiscuous women of Lingthem; but as far as I can make out their invitations were never refused.[13] Fourteen-year-old Chimpet gave a good illus-

[13] Professor Malinowski records a similar situation in the Trobriands in *The Sexual Life of Savages* (Routledge: London, 1929) page 247–8: 'The (medical officer) was once baffled by finding all the boys in a community afflicted with a very virulent and obviously recent gonorrhea, while all the women to be considered in this connection were as yet quite healthy. Finally he obtained a confession from one of his patients that he and his companions had copulated among others with a woman, so old, decrepit, and ugly, that the medical officer had thankfully and unhesitatingly omitted her in his several inspections. . . .' 'I was able to ascertain that the ugliest and most repulsive people have, not only sporadic but regular intercourse.' Professor Malinowski finds this notion so repulsive that he accounts for it 'by their manner of carrying out this physiological activity', which in the Trobriands may entail very slight physical contact. This explanation does not however hold good for the Lepchas; see Chapter Twelve, p. 330. I think primitives dissociate, in a way we cannot, the public attitudes of parading a desirable partner, and the private ones of physiological gratification. In this connection it is perhaps worth noting that in the Somerset village where I live potentially jealous situations arise in the case of people whom I personally would consider, either through age or ugliness, to be almost sexless.

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married, and as a consequence all their children were devils and snakes and lizards. As soon as they were born their mother cast them aside without giving them milk. Finally she produced a normal child called Rilbu Shingbu whom she nursed; but when the devils saw this child getting the milk that had been denied them they were jealous and they took counsel and killed the child. Their incest was betrayed by the dog who guarded the door. When the parents were shamed and the child killed they buried the child in the black rock on the right of the Talung valley, which can be seen to this day, and thereafter in disgust they divided their property and separated. Komsi*thing* went to Tibet and he took with him all the riches and jewels and animals which the Tibetans have till this day. Narzong-*nycu* turned towards our country but she was careless and that is why our country is so poor.

'After that Komsi*thing* summoned all the devils to him and all came except Doam *moong* who is the devil of leprosy, and he counselled the devils and said to them "You are devils and you must act according to your nature; but you must take an oath that when men are born you will accept them if they give you pigs and oxen and rice and other things to eat; if you are looked after you must go away, you must obey the Mun and Padem and the sacrificer". They all took this oath except Doam *moong* who was not present and that is the reason why you can never drive him away and leprosy cannot be cured.

'But still there was no Mun; Itpomu had placed all the devils in the big plain Azum Patham; but there they had nothing to eat. So then Itpomu created the Mun spirit and sent her to feed them. When the Mun arrived at Azum Patham she said to the devils "You are older than I am and I am helpless; I will return to Itpomu". But the devils begged her to stay, saying that if she went away they would always be hungry; if she stayed they would promise to obey her. They swore this by three great oaths; first they cut their finger nails and swore on them: then they spat on the Kashou tree and the tree withered, finally they spat in the sea and the sea dried up. Since that time the Mun must find out what sacrifices are needed and give them to the devils and the devils will always obey them.'

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The other important story for which *loong* has to be obtained before it can be publicly repeated is the story of the *Origin of Marriage*. With its internal repetitions and lists of names it takes between two and three hours to repeat; it is always repeated

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verbatim, though not necessarily to an audience, by the Sacrificer on the second day of the marriage feast. I am giving a somewhat shortened version of it in an Appendix,[8] but there are one or two points to which I should like to draw attention. Tarbong-bo, the inventor of marriage, was Itpomu's youngest son, and was still drinking her milk when he saw, desired and tried to rape Na-rip-nom; when he failed in this because he had not given the proper presents his mother sent him to his elder brother Komsi*thing* for advice and help. It will be noticed that there is no sort of transition or *rite de passage* between the child and the boy of marrying age; and that the elder brother, and not the father or paternal or maternal uncle is the natural person for a young man to turn to for help and advice. In the Mun mythology the father is never important; Débu, the husband of Itpomu, is merely a name, without personality or independent existence; it seems possible that he is a relatively modern importation. I think the same is possibly true of Tak-bo-*thing*, the grandchild of Itpomu and the child of Narzong-*nyou* (sometimes his father is Komsi*thing*, sometimes some other male supernatural); Tak-bo-*thing* is simultaneously a supernatural and the first human being and a great number of stories are told about him, chiefly to explain the origin of different human customs; but he is inextricably confused with Tashey-*thing* or Guru Rimpuché, and it seems to me probable that he is to a very great extent a Tibetan import, though probably anterior to the Lepcha's conversion to lamaism.

The chief supernaturals of the Mun are the two feminine deities Itpomu and Narzong-*nyou*. Itpomu herself is never directly invoked; it is always her creations who are sacrificed and prayed to. Narzong-*nyou* is really the chief Lepcha goddess; she is as it were the local God of Sikkim, of the Lepchas' country; she lived in the country and is responsible for its geography, flora, and, especially fauna. She is also responsible for a great number of institutions. Her elder brother and husband Komsi*thing* is also responsible for a number of habits and institutions, but he is in a way a foreigner; after he and his wife separated he took himself to Tibet. Except in the harvest rites the two of them are always mentioned in prayers and sacrifices, together with all the other supernaturals involved. The invocation usually takes hours, for all the relevant gods in all their manifestations, with their wives and their children must be mentioned by name; in private sacrifices

[8] See Appendix IV.

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APPENDIX IV

THE SACRED STORY OF THE ORIGIN OF MARRIAGE

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(This is one of the two Lepcha stories which can only be recited by those people who have obtained the ceremonial qualification or *loong*. The other story is the long Mun genesis (see Chapter Eight, p. 223) of which the greater part consists of a long catalogue of names.

The sacred story of the origin of marriage has to be repeated in its entirety by the officiant at each marriage. It takes between two and three hours to rehearse, owing to the innumerable internal repetitions and culminations which I have indicated in brackets. Nearly every paragraph is repeated twice, and some many times more.)

When Itpomu had completed creation there were no husbands and wives. The last person she bore was a son called Tarbong-bo whom she nursed. When the child grew big enough to work he told his mother that he would like to travel and see the world. His mother said "No, you are too young" but he insisted, and so she cooked some rice for him and put it into his knapsack. So the next morning he travelled by the road called Parhi Pageun and came to the top of Paki Chu; from there he went down to Palyang Chu, which is a mountain above Sakhyong and can be seen on a clear day. From there he saw the *palit samper koong* tree covered with fruits, and *pedong*, *taryong athyak kanyoong* and many other birds eating the fruit. When he saw that he sat down and ate his rice; then he returned home in the evening and climbed on to his mother's lap and sucked her milk. His mother then asked "What did you see?" He told her what he had seen (*verbal repetition*). Then his mother said "If you are my son you must go and get *yongming yongsong* (which is a kind of bamboo) and the thread *komok ki* (to make traps)." That night he slept at home and the next day he went and got what his mother had said, cutting down the bamboos and returned home. The day after that he went back to Palyang Chu and made snares with the threads and set them on the trees and returned and climbed on his mother's lap and told her what he had done. His mother told him that he must go back early in the morning. He did so and found all the different sorts of birds caught in the snares, so many that they made a full load. When he had collected the birds he reset the snares and then went home and said to his mother "Mother, if these birds are good to eat, eat them and take them as my repayment for your milk: if they are no good, throw them away." Itpomu replied "They are good to eat: and I accept them as a recompense for my milk."

The next morning Tarbong returned to the tree, but instead of birds in the traps he found in every trap a penis, exactly like real life, made out of wood.

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Tarbong was angry at this, threw the penises away, and reset the traps. Then he went home and climbed on to his mother's lap and said " Mother, today I have nothing to bring you ; there were no birds in the traps, just penises of wood." At this his mother said " If you are my son, you will go and hide yourself so carefully that even the birds cannot see you, and then in your hiding place you can stay and see who does this thing." The next morning he returned and found the snares again full of penises ; he threw them away, and reset the snares and then hid himself so well that even the birds could not see him. After a time a beautiful girl dressed in *kaji lasong* (nettle cloth) arrived and started to make wooden penises. She was very beautiful ; her name was Na Rip Nom, and her mother was Ta Im Ta Mit. Tarbong was angry when he saw her doing this and he climbed up the tree to try to stop her, and they struggled and rolled hither and thither ; and then he got excited and tried to rape her, but he could not do so and so they separated and he went home and climbed on his mother's lap and said to her " Mother, I have come home without any birds." " What did you see, my son ? " " I found Naripnom making penises of wood, and I tried to copulate with her, but I could not. So I return empty-handed. She is very beautiful." Then Itpomu said " If you want to possess that girl you had better go to your elder brother Komsi*thing* who lives at Rungzing Patham."

So Tarbong went to Komsi*thing*, and when he saw his younger brother he asked him why he had come. So Tarbong told him (*recapitulation*) : " This girl was putting penises in my traps, and I wanted to possess her but could not, and my mother advised me to come to you." Then Komsi-*thing* said " How can you expect to possess the girl unless you give the marriage price *nyomsa afaar* and make a sacrifice with *chi* and butter *sakyou tsok rum-faat ?* Do you love this girl ? " " Very much." " Then I advise you to go to your *ingtong* in Nepal and get from him the pig of the plains Malu Mayeng and buy a copper vessel." So Tarbong went to Nepal and brought back a pig and a copper vessel. When he returned Komsi*thing* said " I advise you to go to your *ingtong* in Bhutan to get the cloth *kamo*." So he went to Bhutan and returned with the cloth, and then he had the pig and the copper pot and the cloth. (*The story cumulates—The House that Jack Built.*) From his Tibetan *ingtong* he got a rug Numbo. From Mayel near Konchen he got millet. From Kanyong (Sikkim) he got an ox.

Now at this time there was no fire in the world ; it was only in the land between earth and heaven called Mashyok Matel where the demons dwelt, in the houses of the Deut *moong* who were smiths and were called Tangshyo Tangong Karvo. Now when Komsi*thing* told Tarbong to go there to fetch fire to cook the millet he was frightened and said he would not go among the devils for then they would eat him. So Komsi*thing* called on all human beings and animals and birds and insects to volunteer to go and fetch the fire, promising rewards of gold and jewels and rich cloths. When this offer was made the bird Kahryok Fo smiled and said " I will go for a reward." And the bird flew there and found the smith's house empty as all the people were out working elsewhere, so it took a brand in its beak from the fireplace and flew back. On its way back it came to the Kashou tree (chestnut) ; there it felt hungry, and laid the brand on a branch while it looked for fruit. But the wind blew and the flames sprang up and a great fire raged over the world, and the bird was caught

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in it; that is the reason why till this day it has short feathers and a black face. It was ashamed and did not return to Komsi*thing*.

Komsi*thing* waited for the bird but it did not come and he saw the fire, so he asked for another volunteer; and this time an insect (? *wasp or firefly—like a grasshopper, but flies*) *takpyom nomyor nyom* volunteered to go for a reward. When it got to the smith's house all the Deut *moong* were away, so it lay on its back by the fireplace and looked at the house upside down; and the whole house turned upside down. When the Deut *moong* returned from the west it found its house upside down and searched and found the insect who had done it lying on its back; he tried to catch it, but it wriggled and flew away. The Deut *moong* said "Why have you upset my house in this way? I shall kill you for it." The insect said "If you do kill me, your house will never get straight again." "Please don't do that. What have you come for?" "Komsi*thing* has sent me to fetch fire." "I will give you some, if you promise to straighten my house; but you cannot carry fire in your mouth." "Yes, I can." They argued, and finally the insect took a brand in its mouth, and the Deut *moong* put a flint and tinder up its backside. On his return the insect rested by the Mong Ing Pong tree, and put down the brand at the foot of the tree; but the wind came and blew it to a blaze and the insect got therefrom a black face. But it flew back to Komsi*thing* and gave him the flint and tinder from his backside, since he had lost the brand; and he told him all that the Deut *moong* had told him, and showed him how to make a fire with dry grass. So they made a fire and cooked the millet in the copper vessel, but, when the millet was cooked they found they had no yeast.

The only person who possessed yeast was an old woman who lived in the plains called Numli-*nyou*; so Komsi*thing* asked who would volunteer to go and fetch it, promising great rewards. The insect *takder thing* said it would go and it went to live with the old woman for some days and helped her. One day she started to prepare *chi*, and cooked the millet; but when it came to the moment of putting in the yeast she covered *takder* with a close woven basket *tangar*. But when *takder* was inside he cried "Grandmother, in this basket I can see everything which is going on in the world; if you want to hide something from me you should cover me with a *tangjang* (this is a loose woven basket)." The old woman believed what he said and covered him with a *tangjang* and so he could see all that she was doing, though he pretended he could not. He saw her take a pot from the back of her neck, and pour something from it into her hands. Then she rubbed her hands together and scattered the dust over the cooked millet; she replaced the pot; and put the millet in the basket. Then *takder* cried "Grandmother, please take me out of this basket; I am suffocating." So Numli-*nyou* removed the basket.

After two days the lovely smell of ferment rose from the millet, and then the old woman put it in an earthen pot and covered the pot well up, and stood it over the fire. *Takder* tried to get the pot with yeast in it, but he could not; at last he hit on a plan. He told Numli-*nyou* he could see a louse in her hair and asked her to let him remove it: she agreed so he jumped on her shoulders and started delousing her. While this operation was going on Numli-*nyou* became sleepy; and then *takder* removed the pot very very slowly and very very quietly and ran away. When he was half-way away she woke up and missed *takder*. Then she discovered the theft and saw him running away and shouted after him

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"I thought you were my grandson, but I see you are nothing but a thief; you have stolen my yeast and will give it to everybody all over the world. So I set my curse on it; may it make everybody who drinks it drunk and quarrelsome." And so it has been; when people get drunk they quarrel.

When *takder* returned to Komsi*thing* with the yeast, Komsi*thing* asked him if he knew how to make *chi*: *takder* said he did (*complete recapitulation*) and they followed his instructions; but since they had no earthenware pots to put the fermented *chi* in they put it in baskets, well covered with leaves. Then Komsi*thing* asked *Taknyom* what reward he desired for bringing the fire: *Taknyom* replied "Gold and jewels and clothes are no use to an animal; what I want is to be given the plants *mangder* and *sanghlo* which grow in the valley." (*He was given these.*) Similarly *Takder* (*complete recapitulation*) was granted the leavings at the bottom of the spoons and plates and patyoot.

When the *chi* was ready all were afraid to be the first to drink. Eventually the snake Putsong *beu* was summoned and drank it; when it had drunk it dashed away like lightning. Seeing this all the gods and men were frightened to drink. After that the snake Pamol *beu* was summoned; but when it had drunk it ran about biting people and animals so that they all died. (When Sangé *rum* saw that the snake would kill everybody if it was allowed to behave so he set a lock on its mouth; and nowadays it bites very few people.) Next the snake Poblyok *beu* was summoned: when it had drunk it fell senseless. Komsi*thing* gave that snake the ferns to live in; it is harmless. After this they thought that the *chi* was harmless; but then they found they had no butter for *Sakyou faat*. So Komsi*thing* went to Itpomu and asked for butter so that they could *Sakyou faat* for the marriage of Tarbong and Naripmu. He said to his mother "We have the *chi*, but no butter." Itpomu said "Get a bamboo *yongtong*," and when he had got it she filled it with the butter which she had from her cows. Then on her instructions nine containers (*takner*) of *chi* were prepared, and their edges were smeared with butter.

Now all the gods and men gathered for the marriage of Tarbong and Naripnom. Everything was prepared in due order; all the gifts were placed on one side, and then Komsi*thing rum faat* with *chi* and *sakyou*. This is the reason why today when a marriage is celebrated all the gods are worshipped, and these gifts are given. Only when Tarbong and Naripmu were husband and wife was he able to possess her. This is the reason why to-day Lepchas still give the same gifts; this is BRI-IT, the origin of marriage.

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particular case his elder brother agreed to regard him in the light of a co-husband, which meant that the Dorje-Lopön and his elder brother's wife could live together quite openly. This state of affairs was almost exactly similar to the so-called Tibetan polyandry. It is not usual amongst Lepchas, and the Mandal told me that he had not heard of any other cases. After the return of the elder the two brothers lived with the one wife in perfect amity for years. The elder brother died some time ago, and it was only after his wife's death that the Dorje-Lopön actually married, since the original ceremony was performed only by his elder brother. There were no children by this marriage.

I often wondered why he decided to marry so late in life; but after we got to know him well he told us, with a twinkle in his eye, that for an old man marriage was preferable to promiscuity. Also, in his old age he liked to think that there was someone to care for him. He seemed to have a good knowledge of his books and generally officiated at the monastery services, since his senior does not nowadays often attend. He is the only man in Lingtem who has acquired the necessary knowledge to keep away hail, and for this reason his services are much in demand at certain times of the year. He has no property of his own, and lives in the house of Tafoor, the son of his younger brother.

* * * * *

Tafoor, whose rank is *Umzet*, is secretary and treasurer of Lingtem monastery. Inclined to be stout, he has few worldly cares and looks the typical jovial monk. His father, until the time of his death, was Mukhtiyar of the whole of Jongu district; as a result of which Tafoor and his brother have inherited not only a considerable number of fields, but also one of the best houses in the village, complete with its own private altar, images, and books. He is by far the best-educated man in Lingtem, and has a good knowledge of Tibetan sacred literature: also he speaks Nepali. Although a Lama he might have followed his father but for the fact,

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for the girl to marry both brothers. If this is done only Pichi will be required to carry out the ceremony; and having done this he can hand the girl over to his younger brother. There would be no objection to him marrying what would theoretically be a second wife, should he later wish to do so. In the meantime Pichi gets all the amusement he wants with his elder brother's wife. This he told me late one night when he was somewhat the worse for wear. In addition to his own language, he also speaks Sikkim Tibetan and is the only man in the village who can read and write Nepali. Because of this all official correspondence comes to him for translation. He has not yet fully readjusted himself to the simplicity of village life, but, even so, already thinks he would rather live at home.

Datoop's wife is one of the most outstanding characters in Lingtem. She was married at twelve but did not live with her husband until after his return from Gangtok. Unlike most other women, she is often to be seen in charge of work and her orders are instantly obeyed. She has the reputation of giving good food at her house, but, according to Tafoor, would be a better cook if she took a little less to drink. She has a pleasing open face, but her appearance is somewhat spoilt by a missing canine tooth. She came originally from a village beyond Mangen, and still visits her old home occasionally, where her brothers are still living. She has better jewellery than any other women in the village; this she bought with the proceeds of her private fields. In her opinion women have a hard time, and no private life at all. She thinks, however, that grown-up girls are glad to get away from home and that marriage is the best state for them. Like her husband she, too, is a Lama and holds the rank of Chötembu; and as such has the power to beat up people in the monastery. I asked her what sort of offences would merit her interference and she replied, without the slightest hesitation, "having sexual intercourse inside the building, or within its grounds." She added that it would be considered slightly shameful for a woman, although an Inebu, to beat a man; but nobody really minds.

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to enter the ground where the monastery staircase now is; 821
but before it actually touched the ground it appeared to jink 831
away to one side, and a large thunderbolt fell at the exact spot where Babu was sheltering, under the walnut-tree just outside Jiroong's house.

"As for me, it makes no difference if I strip off all my clothes and dance naked in public; my genitalia are completely innocuous. There is no effect if people laugh at a woman's private parts."

This is the origin of marriage among the Lepchas: 581 ●
Itpumu was the creator of all things, of human beings and 539
natural objects, even of Kinchinjunga. After having many 773
children she at last gave birth to Tarbong Bo, the youngest of all her sons. When he began to take notice and could walk about a little, he said to Itpumu one day: "Mother, are you going to travel about the world, or do you intend always to stay here?" She replied: "No, I shall never leave this place; and you, too, must never leave me." But Tarbong was very anxious to see the world, and at last persuaded his mother to let him go. She prepared some rice, put it in a bag, and sorrowfully let him go. He set off over the slopes of Konchen, after which he came to a place called Paki Chu.

From Paki Chu he descended to Palyung Chu, which is a plateau a little above Sakyong, in the Talung Valley. As he sat on Palyung Chu he saw below him many beautiful fruit trees, and many kinds of birds which were busily eating the fruit. As he sat watching the scene he ate the rice his mother had given him. He thought he had seen enough for the time being and hurried home to his mother. Arrived there he climbed at once on to her lap and searched for her breasts. While she was suckling him she asked him what he had seen: "Oh, Mother! I have been to Palyung Chu, where I saw the most beautiful trees, and many birds eating the fruit." To this Itpumu replied: "Now, my son, if you are indeed a real man you must get hold of *Yong Ming Yong-song* and *Komok Ki*. These are two special kinds of thread, and when

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581 you have found them you must make loops with which to
539 catch those birds."
773 Tarbong spent the night with his mother, and early the following morning he set off in search of the thread. At last he found a special kind of bamboo, which his mother had described to him. From this he cut a few branches, shredded them, and twisted them into thread. After this he again returned to his home.

The next morning he took his thread and again went down to Palyung Chu. He climbed up into a tree, fixed the thread-loops, and once more returned to his mother, telling her what he had done. "You must return early to-morrow," she said, "and see how many birds you have caught."

He did as he was told, and when he again reached Palyung Chu he found so many birds caught in his loops that he could only carry them back with difficulty. He reset his traps and set off home again. As soon as he got there he said to his mother: "If these birds are really edible please eat them yourself in return for all the milk I have had from your body: but if they are not fit to eat, then just throw them away." "They are very good to eat," said Itpumu, "and I will gladly eat them in exchange for my milk."

The following morning Tarbong again set off to examine his traps; but when he reached the place imagine his surprise when he found in his loops, not birds but wooden models of the human penis! He was very angry, and taking the objects out of the loops he threw them away, reset the traps, and once more returned to his mother.

Itpumu asked him why he had come back empty-handed. He told her what he had seen, whereupon she said that the following morning he must hide himself carefully in the bushes and watch what happened. She said he was to hide himself so carefully that even the insects and birds could not see him.

When he reached Palyung Chu he found that the same thing had happened again: once more the loops were filled with penises. Again he threw them away, reset the traps, and

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581 539 773 then hid himself as his mother had ordered him. Presently a very beautiful girl, whose name was Narip Nom, came to the spot. She sat down on the grass and at once began to fashion more wooden penises. As soon as Tarbong realised what she was doing he became very angry and rushed out of his hiding place. He caught hold of the girl, who was in reality his own sister, and immediately tried to ravish her. They struggled together for some little time; but since he met with no encouragement Tarbong at last desisted, and once more returned to his mother. "Well!" said Itpumu, "what did you see this time?" to which he replied: "Mother, I saw a very lovely girl making wooden penises. I tried hard to possess her, but she would not let me approach her." In reply to this Itpumu said: "Now, my son, if you really want to possess that girl you must go to your brother, he that lives in Ragzum Partam, and he will tell you what to do."

Tarbong at once set off to visit his brother. He told him the whole story: how he found the girl making penises and how he had tried unsuccessfully to rape her, and asked for his brother's advice. "I take it that you really want this girl," said the brother; to which Tarbong replied that he did. "Very well then, I must first tell you that you will never possess her until you have paid the marriage price (*Nyomfar*), and done the usual sacrifice (*Saunkyo Tsop Rumfat*). But first you must go to your Nepali blood-brother (*Ing-zong*) and buy a large copper vessel." Tarbong did as he was told, and was then ordered to go to his *Ing-zong* in Bhutan and bring back a length of a special kind of cloth (*Kamo*). He was then sent to his Tibetan *Ing-zong* to buy a rug (*Numbu*), and then to another Nepali blood-brother, who lived in the plains, to buy a special kind of pig called *Mulu Mayeng*. Next he was sent to Mayel and told to bring millet, after which he was ordered to visit yet another Tibetan in order to buy an ox. This also he did. Finally, his brother told him he must go to Mushyok Mutel, a place between heaven and earth, where there was a blacksmith, the only man in the world who at that time possessed any fire.

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woman take a pot from inside her clothing and pour something out of it into her hand. This powder, for such it was, she mixed with the millet, after which she put the pot back inside her bosom. She now collected all the millet and put it inside a basket, at the same time telling Takder Ting that he could now uncover himself.

After two days the fermenting millet smelt delicious, and then the old woman put all the *chi* into an earthen pot and covered it well up. Takder tried hard to get possession of this pot, but the woman never let it out of her sight. He was also beginning to despair of ever obtaining the pot of ferment when suddenly he had an idea. He told the old woman that she had a great many lice in her hair and suggested that he should pick them out for her. To this she agreed; and while he was searching for the vermin, which took a very long time, the old woman got sleepy, so that he was able to extract the pot from her bosom; after which he ran off as hard as he could go. When he was well away from the house the old woman woke up to what had happened and shouted after him. "I thought you were a good grandson to me," she said, "but I find you are nothing more than a common thief. You have stolen my ferment and now my secret will be spread all over the world." Then she cursed him, saying: "May this thing, which is harmless now, make people drunk and senseless whenever they drink *chi;* and when they are drunk may they quarrel among themselves." It is for this reason that nowadays drunken people often quarrel.

When Takder Ting returned he showed the two brothers how to make fermented *chi:* but since they had no earthen pots they made it in baskets and put it on the rack above the fire to dry and ferment, in exactly the same manner as is done by Lepchas nowadays. The brothers asked Takder Ting what reward he would like for all the trouble he had taken. "I want no gold and silver," he said; "nor do I want fine clothes. All that I wish is to be allowed to eat the remnants left on the plates after human beings have finished their meals, and the scraps that adhere to the spoon when

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539 581 773 Tarbong was afraid to visit this place. "It is the abode of devils," he said, "and they will surely eat me, a fate of which I am not at the moment desirous." When it was clear that Tarbong had no intention of visiting this place his brother called all the animals, birds, and insects together and asked if anyone among them would volunteer to go in search of fire, at the same time offering a handsome present in return for this service. A pheasant smiled to itself and said it was ready to go. He set off, and when he reached the house of the blacksmith, who really was a devil, he found it quite empty, since everyone was out working in the fields. He went inside, where a fire was burning, snatched up a brand and immediately flew away. On the way back he came to a chestnut tree and decided to stay and eat a little of the fruit; but before doing this he laid the brand on the ground. While he was searching for the fruit a strong wind got up. This spread the fire so much that before long the whole world appeared to be on fire. The pheasant ran off in fear, but did not dare to return to its master: but since it got scorched in the fire this explains why pheasants now have short tails and black faces.

Parbong and his brother waited a long time for the bird to return. They did not realise what had happened although, of course, they could see the flames and smoke spreading gradually over the world. At last they grew impatient and asked for another volunteer. This time the firefly said it was willing to go; but only for a really good reward. When it reached the blacksmith's house the firefly found that again it was empty, so he entered and looked for the fire. Unfortunately, however, he had no means of carrying it away. He did not immediately return but sat there for a bit with his head on the ground and his feet in the air. This had the effect of causing the house to turn upside down. After a little while the blacksmith himself returned, and was astonished to find what had happened to his house. He searched all round to see who had done this mischief, and at last noticed the firefly standing on its head. He tried hard to catch it but

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it managed to flutter away. "Why have you done this mischief?" said the blacksmith. "Now I am going to kill you." But to this the firefly replied: "Kill me, if you like, but remember that if you do your house will remain upside down for ever." He then went on to tell the blacksmith why he had been sent. The latter thought for a bit and at last replied: "All right, I will give you the fire, but first you must put my house in order again." The blacksmith then took up some fire to give the insect, but suddenly realised that it had no means of carrying it. He searched about in the house and at last produced a flint and some tinder. These he stuck into the firefly's bottom, which explains why this creature still goes about with a fire in its tail.

As soon as the firefly returned it showed the two brothers how to use the flint and tinder. The elder brother lighted a fire and thought he would prepare some *chi*, when he realised that he had nothing with which to make it ferment. He was somewhat at a loss to know what to do when one Takder Ting, a retainer of the family, volunteered to go and fetch the ferment from an old woman named Numli Nyu, who lived in the plains and who alone possessed the secret.

Takder Ting stayed with her for a few days and soon made himself useful about the house, as a result of which she soon grew used to his presence. After he had been there for a day or two the old woman decided to make some ferment; but before commencing her preparations she took particular care to cover Takder Ting with a *tangar*, which is a basket with such close mesh that he found it impossible to see out of it. When he had been covered over, however, he told the old woman that he could see everything, and suggested that if she really wanted to prevent him from seeing what she was doing it would be better to cover him with a *tung-jyang*, which is a special kind of basket with a very open mesh. The old woman believed his story and did as he suggested. He told her that he could see nothing at all, although he could, of course, see perfectly all that was happening.

He watched very carefully, and presently saw the old

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cooking." This request was granted, and the descendants of Takder Ting, who was in reality a cockroach, continue to live on such things up to the present day.

The *chi* was now ready; but since up to that time no one had ever drunk it, it was decided that a cobra should taste it first. He got very drunk, and shot away like a streak of lightning. When the others saw this happen they were afraid to taste this new and potent liquid. They then called another snake, one called Pumel Beu, which is some kind of grass snake. He drank the *chi;* and soon got so excited that he started to bite the people and other animals who were sitting round about. All those he bit died within a few minutes, so that when Sungay Rum, the god who is in charge of all animals, saw what had happened he at once put a lock on Pumel Beu's mouth, so that he is nowadays almost harmless.

After this the snake Poblyuk Beu, the python, was called to drink; but since he was big and strong the *chi* only had the effect of making him sleepy and senseless, and very soon he curled up in the bushes, sleeping peacefully. When they saw this the people decided that there was no harm in *chi;* for were not human beings also big and strong?

The only thing now lacking was butter for the sacrifice of *Saunkyo Fat* and this Tarbong's brother himself fetched from their mother, who herself prepared it. He took it back, prepared nine bamboo containers of *chi*, and smeared a little butter round the rim of each, just as a Mun does to-day when he wants to make an offering. Now all the gods and humans gathered together for the feast and Tarbong was married to Narip Nom. All the marriage gifts, the copper pot, the rug, and so on, were placed on one side, and the ox was tied up near. This was then sacrificed by Tarbong's brother and consumed by the assembled company.

After this Tarbong found that his sister no longer refused his advances, and he lay with her regularly with increasing pleasure. But they never had any children.

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
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[582] future father-in-law, the parties being often united before
583 the woman leaves her parents' roof, in cases where the payment is not forthcoming, and the bridegroom prefers giving his and his wife's labour to the father for a stated period in lieu. On the time of service expiring, or the
585 money being paid up, the marriage is publicly celebrated by feasting and riot. The females are generally chaste,
●581 [584] and the marriage-tie is strictly kept, its violation being heavily punished by divorce, beating, slavery, &c. In cases of intermarriage with foreigners, the children belong to the father's country. All the labours of the house, the field,
462 [567] and march, devolve on the women and children, or slaves if they have them.

164 Small-pox is dreaded, and infected persons often cruelly shunned: a suspicion of this or of cholera frequently emptying a village or town in a night. Vaccination has been
[751] introduced by Dr. Pearson, and it is much practised by Dr. Campbell; it being eagerly sought. Cholera is scarcely known at Dorjiling, and when it has been imported thither has never spread. Disease is very rare amongst the Lepchas; and ophthalmia, elephantiasis, and leprosy, the scourges of hot climates, are rarely known. Goitre prevails,* though not so conspicuously as amongst Bhoteeas,

* May not the use of the head instead of the shoulder-strap in carrying loads be a predisposing cause of goitre, by inducing congestion of the laryngeal vessels? The Lepcha is certainly far more free from this disease than any of the tribes of E. Nepal I have mixed with, and he is both more idle and less addicted to the head-strap as a porter. I have seen it to be almost universal in some villages of Bhoteeas, where the head-strap alone is used in carrying in both summer and winter crops; as also amongst the salt-traders, or rather those families who carry the salt from the passes to the Nepalese villages, and who very frequently have no shoulder-straps, but invariably head-bands. I am far from attributing all goitre, even in the mountains, to this practice, but I think it is proved, that the disease is most prevalent in the mountainous regions of both the old and new world, and that in these the practice of supporting enormous loads by the cervical muscles is frequent. It is also found in the Himalayan sheep and goats which accompany the salt-traders, and whose loads are supported in ascending, by a band passing under the throat.

101 tion to the word 'Mother' is interesting, because customs are to be found amongst the
192 Lepchas which appear to be vestiges of the primitive-social institution of Matriarchy or the mother-ship of clans; whilst this institution still flourishes amongst their co-related tribes in the neighbouring Garo-hills, who trace their descent through their mothers and not
192 through their fathers. Thus, as apparent vestiges of matriarchy amongst the Lepchas, I
●581 find still surviving the usage of female suitorship, in which the young woman proposes marriage by offering to the man selected a basket of eggs; personal inclination in the choice of a husband; monogamy as a rule only relaxed in case the wife proves barren,
[531] tribal endogamy, avoidance of girl's mother, and not unfrequent Teknonymy whereby the father is called after his child — thus the father of Tak-li-ap (*Tak-li-ap bo*). Moreover all
103 the tribal groups (*a-pit*), of which there are several scores, bear the affix 'mother'
192 (*mo*) [1]), although the proper name in this group title is territorial, the name of a particular valley or glen or hillside; and their grouping is itself merely territorial and has no significance as to marriage or true tribal division. Instances of such groups are 'The Wormwood mother' (*Tak-ñel-mo*), for the locality of this hamlet is exceptionally overgrown with wormwood; 'The Foot mother' (*Sang-dyang-mo*): this hamlet is one of the very few which lies at the *foot* of the tropical forge of the Tista-river; 'the Stockade mother' (*Tung-sung-mo*) this village near Darjiling occupies the site of an old stockade; 'the sloping-field mother' (*Ling-tam-mo*), 'the Namchi mother' (*Nam tsii-mo*), and thus we also have 'the Darjiling mother' for those born at Darjiling (*Darjeling-mo*). The only group of the tribe,
101 it may be added, which does not bear this affix of 'mother' is the highest section or
192 *A-den-pan-tso* [2]) from which, as its name denotes, the kings (*Pano*) and the ministers (*A-den*) used to be drawn — now however its members have a preponderating strain of Tibetan blood.

192 As instances of others of these archaic words and phrases whose meanings have been forgotten by the Lepchas, but which seem to me to be apparently of a descriptive character, may be cited the words and phrases qualifying 'fields' and 'world', namely '*Ku-ran-mii*' and '*zor*'. In the former the words literally read 'bosom-stone-below', which would read 'the fields on the bosom of stone underneath.' The prefix *Ku* also is used for 'clothes', with the same meaning as Tibetan '*gō*', (gos) a coat, and *gur*, a tent, in either case would give the sense of 'the fields clothing the bosom of the stones'. Whilst the word joined to 'world' means 'rain' (*so* or *se*, which is literally applicated to the Lepcha part of the world as it is one of the rainiest sites on the globe; but probably it also meant originally the rain of the eyes or *tears*, and was perhaps thus used by the weary toiling Lepcha in the pessimistic sense of 'tearful world'.

[194] The homonymic character of the language also, would suggest the possibility that some of these archaic words are descriptive as in the tonic Chinese and Burmese, such as 'the *flat-thing* plate', 'the *round-thing* bottle' etc. It is to be hoped that this interesting question will be pursued by philologists.

776 The spirits and deities of the tribe are referred to in these songs, and require a little description, as they show the primitive conception of the Lepchas in regard to God, and the deification of natural objects and of their ancestors. The Lepcha gods and godlings are

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[1]) Not *Mung* as stated by Mr. Risley (loc. cit. IV. Appendix 83); this word means 'devil'.
[2]) The affix *tso* is interpreted as 'stock or lineage'.